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CINDERELLA SENDS HER GODMOTHER AWAY

by Natalie Graham

I will never leave this house.

How I hated the company of women
and called my sisters wicked
when they tied down
my restless hands with work,
when they licked me
with their curses.

But, Keeper, all names are curses.

You know how my body
arches for the faithful,
brutal touch of almost family.
How the skin hollers to be rubbed
quiet with hurting.

Don't send your chariot.

Let me slip back into muddy dark.
Let midnight expose a dirt-born,
squared-toed monster
from which all pure hands shrink back.